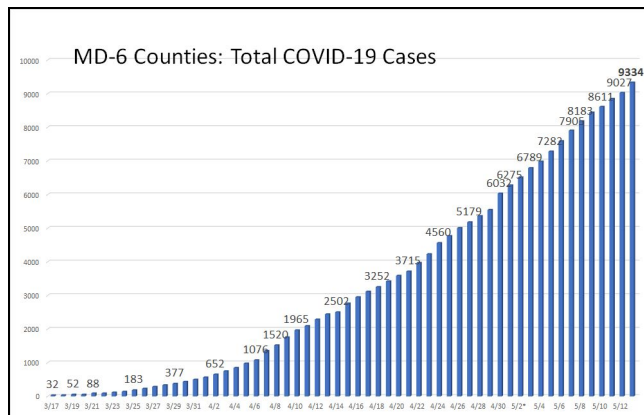
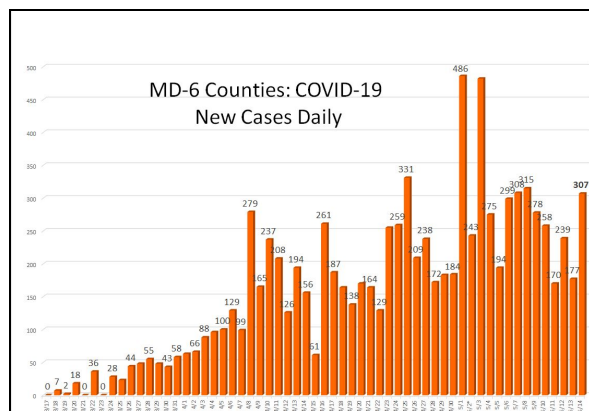
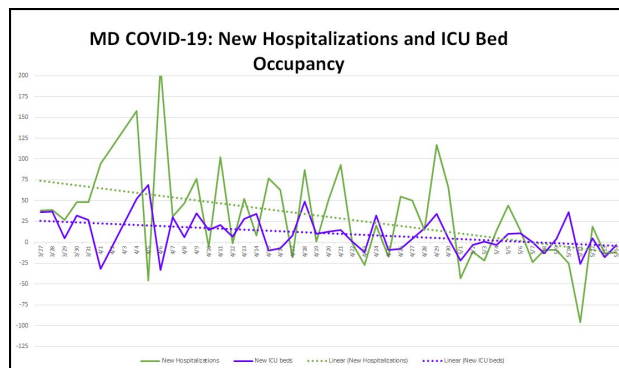
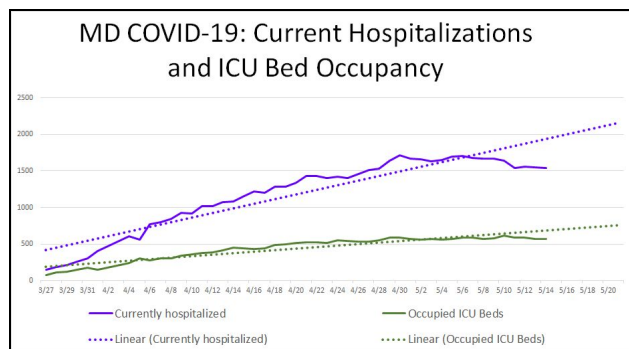


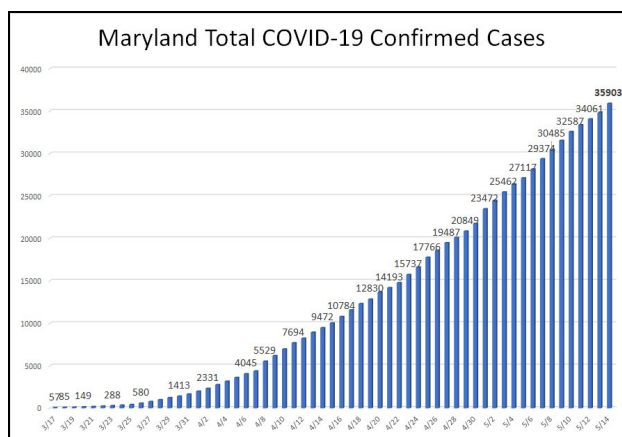
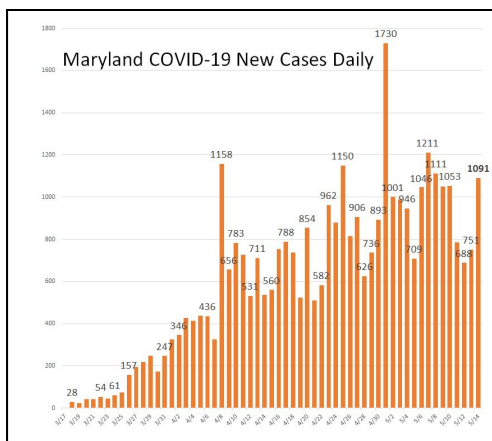
Daily Coronavirus Update: May 14, 5 PM Congressman David Trone (MD6)

Stats @ 5 PM

With increased testing capacity coming online in Maryland, Governor Larry Hogan is tracking trends in **hospitalizations** and **ICU beds** for indicators on when to proceed with steps to fully reopen the state.



MD6 today: MoCo (7,283), Frederick (1,302), (287), Allegany (149), Garrett (6).



MD reports 1,748 total deaths ([MD Dept. of Health](#)).

As of 5 PM today, the United States had recorded 1,411,466 total confirmed cases and 85,489 deaths due to Coronavirus ([JHU](#)).

Federal Updates

- **The U.S. still lacks a strong, centralized, coordinated plan to direct the nation's response to coronavirus and is unprepared to handle both the virus and the annual flu season that begins next fall**, according to Dr. Rick Bright, former director of the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA), who testified today before the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Health. Dr. Bright has filed a whistleblower complaint about being removed from his post and being reassigned to a lesser position at the National Institute for Allergies and Infectious Disease (NIAID). He believes the reassignment was prompted by concerns he raised about BARDA's parent agency, the Dept. of Health and Human Services (HHS).

Dr. Bright testified that superiors at HHS were dismissive of his early efforts to obtain virus samples critical to vaccine development and to sound the alarm on anticipated critical shortages in PPEs. Instead, he said, he was directed to make the malaria drugs chloroquine and hydroxychloroquine available outside of controlled testing conditions, which are necessary to evaluate a drug's safety and efficacy.

The committee also heard from Mr. Michel Bowen, executive vice president of Prestige Ameritech of North Richland, TX, which makes N95 respirators and other masks. Since 2006, when most PPE production had been outsourced overseas, Mr. Bowen has been urging the federal government and entire health care industry to see **domestic production of PPEs as a national security priority**. His company is now producing two million N95 respirators per month, and will be up to four million in another month. They could produce more, he said, but the company will not invest in additional capacity and hire additional employees, only to have to "fire them once this crisis ends" and the U.S. again gives in to its "weakness for low prices" and returns to using only producers in China and Mexico. Mr. Bowen identified himself as a lifelong Republican who voted for President Trump, but who is now "embarrassed" by how the pandemic has been handled.

Maryland Updates

- Almost 65,000 Marylanders filed first-time claims for unemployment last week – part of nearly three million Americans to do so last week, bringing the total new claims to over 36 million since the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the nation in mid-March. The [U.S. Department of Labor](#) estimated the seasonally adjusted **unemployment rate at 15.7 percent**, the highest since the great depression in the 1930s.
- The Maryland Comptroller's Office today predicted the state budget will face **a shortfall between \$925 million and \$1.1 billion** for the current fiscal year due to Covid-19. By fiscal year (FY) 2022, the shortfall could grow to as much as \$4 billion. As reported by [The Baltimore Business Journal](#), Andrew Schaufele, director of the state's Bureau of Revenue Estimates, outlined two scenarios today based on real-time data and financial models. In the more optimistic scenario, Maryland would face a \$925 million shortfall for FY20, which ends June 30; a \$2.1 billion gap for FY21, and a \$2.6 billion gap in FY22. In the more pessimistic scenario, Maryland could see a \$1.1 billion shortfall in FY20, and a \$2.6 billion shortfall in FY21, and a \$4 billion deficit in FY22. Both models assume a vaccine will be widely available by the fall of 2021, and that a second wave of the novel coronavirus does not lead to another widespread economic shutdown. Last week, the governor vetoed several bills that would have resulted in increased spending or tax cuts. Last month, he warned that pending budget cuts will be severe.

District Updates

- Montgomery County
 - a. A new COVID-19 test hotline is expected to launch for Montgomery County residents Thursday. This new hotline is an effort to remove the obstacles and barriers that some residents face when trying to get tested for coronavirus. County Executive Marc Elrich says this will help meet the communities testing needs which is an important factor in getting the spread of the virus under control. Montgomery County Health Officer Dr. Travis Gayles says a lot of residents have not been getting tested because they do not have access to a primary care provider. The cost for the test, and urgent

care visiting fees has also been an issue for some residents. County leaders say this new hotline will provide access to residents regardless of insurance status, and relations to a primary care provider.

- b. Thursday morning the Maryland Department of Health reported 7,548 cases of COVID-19 in Montgomery County, which is a 3.64% increase to the 7,283 cases reported Wednesday. According to the health department, 397 county residents have died from COVID-19. This is a 2.85% increase of deaths since Wednesday. The number of probable deaths is 40. There have been 1,936 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 294 deaths in Montgomery County nursing homes and assisted living facilities according to the Maryland Department of Health numbers released Wednesday. Nursing home case numbers are reported on a weekly basis.
- c. Unemployment claims in Montgomery County topped 7,000 last week, which is about 4,000 fewer than were filed the week ending on May 2, according to the Maryland Department of Labor. An additional 3,258 county residents filed through the federal Pandemic Unemployment Assistant (PUA) and the Pandemic Emergency Compensation (PEUC), which is about 5,000 fewer than last week. Those two funds are part of the federal stimulus bill. During the week ending May 9, 7,133 county residents filed an unemployment claim with the state Department of Labor, according to figures released May 14. Combining all three categories, 10,391 county residents applied for unemployment during the week that ended May 9.
- d. Montgomery County Executive Marc Elrich has made it official, saying the county is not ready to begin easing coronavirus restrictions and that he will issue a countywide stay-at-home order that will go into effect Friday evening when some statewide restrictions are lifted. "We will change the rules as soon as the science says that we can change the rules," Elrich said during a news conference Thursday outside county government headquarters in Rockville, Maryland. "When that happens, we will start down the road of reopening things." Elrich said the county hasn't seen the number of coronavirus cases or deaths steadily declining, which he said is necessary to begin safely reopening.
- e. Until now it was only recommended, but Metro's general manager said all passengers will be required to wear at least a cloth face covering on trains and buses, as of Monday, May 18, to help contain the spread of the coronavirus. Metro General Manager Paul Wiedefeld on Thursday told the Metro Board of Directors that requiring a mask, which can be made of cloth or other materials, is consistent with what Maryland and the District have done. "We think regionwide, from an operational standpoint, this needs to be done," he said.

- Frederick County

- a. Facing a potential "tidal wave" of evictions as the COVID-19 pandemic begins to recede, Frederick's aldermen are looking for information on how to best spend \$100,000 allocated for affordable housing issues. The money in the city's fiscal 2020 budget for an Affordable Housing Reserve Fund could be used for rental assistance and to help renters negotiate with their landlords on the payment of back rent for those who fall behind during the pandemic. With courts not considering evictions and foreclosures during the crisis, the city will face a "tidal wave" of evictions as the pandemic starts to ease, Alderman Ben MacShane said at a workshop with the mayor and aldermen Wednesday. But the aldermen are looking for more information and data before they decide exactly how the money will be spent.
- b. Downtown Frederick's Sky Stage may not have live performances for a while because of COVID-19. But organizers will have a cash flow for when they start back up. The \$10,000 of city money promised annually to the Frederick Arts Council for the live outdoor South Carroll Street concert venue is still a go for fiscal 2021, joining an array of funding awards to other arts and entertainment organizations that managed to dodge the pandemic-fueled threat to their finances — for now. The Frederick Board of Aldermen last week approved a total of about \$44,000 in grants for arts-centered nonprofit groups, which included the \$10,000 that the arts council uses to pay artists at Sky Stage, \$15,000 to the Maryland Ensemble Theatre, \$7,500 to local production company Phenomenology, and \$5,000 to New Spire Arts, among others. The city's approved budget also included \$180,000 for operations at the Weinberg Center for the Arts and \$50,000 for the Delaplaine Arts Center via contract agreements.

- c. Frederick County Public Schools will ask the state to waive 12 school days missed at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, which is seven more than the Maryland State Department of Education indicated it would allow. When public schools across the state shut down without instruction for two weeks in early March, school districts suspected they would be required to make up those days at the end of the year. As the closure extended, the state board of education voted to give State Superintendent Karen Salmon the authority to waive five days for school districts that requested it. Meaning, five days out of those first two weeks would not have to be made up.

- Washington County

- a. An extra infusion of federal funds is coming at a good time for emergency food and shelter programs in Washington County as COVID-19 restrictions exacerbate needs. The county receives a Federal Emergency Management Agency grant each year, which is administered by the United Way of Washington County. Heather Guessford, president and CEO of the local United Way, said this year's recent allocation of \$59,233 is below the \$80,952 in funding received in 2019. But an additional \$84,435 as part of the CARES Act will push the total to \$143,668. "The CARES was a nice surprise, a nice bump to make up for the shortfall of the normal yearly funding," Guessford said.
- b. As Gov. Larry Hogan eased restrictions Wednesday that were imposed to stem the spread of novel coronavirus, a Washington County group released advice on how businesses can safely and successfully reopen. The effort is called "Together We Rise. Respond. Recover. Rebuild." "The purpose is to help businesses safely and responsibly plan to reopen and then reopen aligned with the guidelines of the state and federal government," said Paul Frey, president and CEO of the Washington County Chamber of Commerce. Frey said the first webinar on recovery is scheduled for 11 a.m. Friday. Business owners are invited to the town hall session with government officials, business representatives and local health officials.

- Allegany County

- a. City officials say economic losses stemming from the coronavirus could result in a direct loss of more than \$800,000 to the city's bottom line. A virtual work session was held by city officials on Tuesday in hopes of finalizing the fiscal 2021 budget by June 1. City Comptroller Ken Tressler conducted the session that included Mayor Ray Morris and the four members of the City Council. The city budget year runs from July 1 through June 30. Losses have been accruing in the last quarter of the current 2020 fiscal year and will continue into fiscal 2021 due to the COVID-19 outbreak, according to Tressler.

- Garrett County

- a. Although senior centers in the area are currently closed because of the pandemic, the Meals on Wheels program has increased the number of deliveries over the last two months. Throughout this time, "unsung workers" are sustaining this essential service, including kitchen staff, drivers and support personnel. "We want to highlight the people on the front lines of the program," said Connor Norman, Garrett County Community Action's senior operations manager. "They're getting to work at 6 a.m. and they don't leave until everyone is fed. Kitchen staff like Vicki Tasker, Kevin Greene, Sally Britner and her son Tommy. Drivers like Jim, Gary and Ray. And so many more that go above and beyond for their clients every day. They put themselves at risk every day to shop, prepare, and deliver these foods to elderly and at-risk families."
- b. The final packet distribution for Garrett County elementary school students is scheduled for May 15 at each elementary school. The contents of the packets will also be posted in the Livebinder for online learners. The packets will consist of academic work for three weeks. The fourth week will contain a choice board from the resource teachers titled "Summer Fun Now." Along with the packet distribution, the children will be able to retrieve their personal belongings that were left in desks when schools were closed in March. Teachers will be coordinating with the principals to collect and organize the materials so that each family is able to pick up their children's things.